



WEASC

GSR Orientation Material

Who is a Group Service Representative (GSR)?

A GSR is an NA member who helps "form the foundation of our service structure. . . . GSRs link their groups with the rest of the NA service structure, particularly through the information conveyed in their reports to and from the area committee."*

What is the Area Service Committee (ASC)?

The ASC is where the "work of delivering NA services to the groups and the community occurs."*

Why does an NA group need a GSR?

The GSR provides his or her group with a voice that can literally be heard around the world! GSRs carry the consciences of their groups to the local area, which can then be carried to the regional, and then on to the world. The GSR is the vehicle by which NA groups become part of our global fellowship.

How does the GSR service position function?

The GSR communicates information from the group to the ASC, and from the ASC to the group. The GSR attends the monthly ASC meeting, carrying his or her group's conscience on issues under consideration, as well as any other concerns or needs the group may have. The GSR also reports to his or her group about area business including motions made at the ASC meeting which passed and/or failed, any motions which will be under consideration at the next ASC meeting, and pertinent area, regional, or world activities or events taking place.

About the ASC:

The Area Service Committee assists NA groups in fulfilling their primary purpose of carrying the message by providing various resources. These include disseminating public information about NA to schools and other such facilities, taking NA panels to hospitals and institutions, making literature more readily available, printing and distributing a directory of NA meetings in the area, coordinating activities where members can socialize and celebrate their recovery, maintaining a functioning phoneline so that correct meeting information can be relayed to anyone who calls.

About the GSR:

"GSRs bear great responsibility. While GSRs are elected by and accountable to the group, they are not mere group messengers. . . . they are responsible to act in the best interests of NA as a whole, not solely as advocates of their own groups' priorities."*

GSRs need to be well informed. They should not only read and understand the reports of the ASC's officers and subcommittee chairpersons, they should also read the various handbooks published by the World Service Office (WSO) on each area of service. "After carefully considering their own conscience and what they know about how their group members feel, they should take active, critical parts in the discussions which form the group conscience of the entire committee."*

* All quotes are from *A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous*

What happens at the monthly ASC meeting?

BEFORE THE MEETING

Attending the New GSR Orientation

An orientation is held for all new Group Service Representatives one half hour (30 minutes) before the monthly ASC meeting at the same location. Find the Area Support Person, who conducts the New GSR Orientation.

Placing the Literature Order

GSRs place the literature order for their groups each month immediately before the ASC meeting begins. If you have not already filled out an order form prior to your arrival, the literature committee provides blank order forms at the meeting.

Making the ASC Donation

After placing the literature order, give the group's ASC donation, *in the form of a money order*, to the Area Treasurer. You will be given a receipt, which you should give to your group's treasurer for the group's records.

Obtaining Written Reports and other Printed Materials

The ASC chairperson normally provides minutes of the previous meeting, the agenda for the upcoming meeting, and other information to GSRs via email prior to the meeting. These should be downloaded, printed, and brought to the meeting. In addition, the reports of some ASC officers, subcommittee chairs, and others are not available in advance of the meeting, and copies of these materials are available on a table at the back of the meeting room.

DURING THE MEETING

The Meeting Agenda

The ASC meeting opens with a moment of silence followed by the serenity prayer. The reason we pray before each ASC meeting is to invite a loving Higher Power into the process. The prayer and a few NA readings are then followed by some variation of the following:

1. GSR Open Forum

This is an opportunity for GSRs to communicate with all of the other groups in our area. While a statement that "my meeting is in need of support" is acceptable, it may not be sufficient. It's important to share what's going right at your group's meetings, as well as the difficulties your group faces, because all GSRs can benefit from the experiences of other groups.

2. Administrative Officers Reports

This is when reports are offered by the area officers and subcommittee chairs. Reports are often (but not always) offered by the area Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary; the Regional Committee Member (RCM) who is the area's representative at the regional level; the Website Coordinator; and the Chairs of the various subcommittees: Activities, Phoneline/Public Information, Hospitals & Institutions, Literature, and Youth.

3. Old Business

This is when the area, as a body, considers matters still pending from the previous ASC meeting. Motions which have been previously tabled may come to a vote, and it is crucial that each GSR be aware of, and be prepared to carry, the conscience of his or her group on these issues.

4. New Business

This is when members of the area have the opportunity to present new issues for consideration by the ASC. If you wish to propose a formal motion, it is important to get a blank form from the secretary, to fill out the form, and to give the written motion (including its intent) to the secretary before the ASC takes up new business at the meeting. Motions proposed for the first time may be tabled until the

next ASC meeting, but that is not always the case. When a motion from the ASC is referred to the groups for consideration, the GSR must carry the group's conscience/vote back to the ASC. *On all other matters, the group has given its GSR the authority to judge what the group's conscience would be.* Accordingly, GSRs are encouraged to take an active role at the group level, to talk to individual group members about current issues confronting Narcotics Anonymous, and to have at least some idea about what his or her group's position is, or would be, on such issues.

5. Innovations and Challenges

This is an opportunity for ASC members to make suggestions or offer new ideas to other groups in general or the ASC as a whole, and to challenge the groups or the area in a particular regard.

6. Closing

After the Treasurer's report on the current financial status of the area, the meeting closes with the NA 3rd Step Prayer.

AFTER THE MEETING

Picking Up the Literature Order

While the ASC meeting is conducted, members of the literature subcommittee fill the orders placed by the GSRs prior to the meeting. When the meeting is over, the orders are available to be picked up by GSRs, and will include the Information Pamphlets (IPs) and books ordered as well as flyers for upcoming events and meeting directories as needed.

BACK AT THE GROUP

Before the Next Group Meeting

Bring the literature order to the meeting and give it to the appropriate trusted servant or stock it as needed. Give the literature/donation receipt to the group's treasurer. Update your announcements by getting rid of the outdated ones and adding the new ones to your GSR report to the group.

Organize Your Report

Save everything. Minutes and reports are important, and they make it easier for the GSR to carry information back to the group. Meeting time is precious, but so is information. Put together a brief, written summary of the ASC meeting that can be read to the group. Taking notes at the ASC meeting helps to organize the GSR's report to the group and to ensure that it is clear and concise. Don't read flyers; provide information, and decide what information is important to your group. An announcement that merely lists various meetings which are in "need of support" may not be particularly helpful to your group, or to the meetings listed.

Know What Matters to Your Group

As a GSR, you need to be familiar with what kind of information is important to your group. Your group might want to know about a convention happening in Madagascar, but most groups care more about what is happening closer to home.

Report on the Status of NA Funds

Provide specific information about how 7th Tradition funds are spent. Report on how much was spent on literature and how much of a donation was made to the ASC. Inform the group about such things as how much money was made (or lost) at the last area activity. Finally, keep the group informed about whether the ASC has a surplus of funds, or whether the area's funds are below its prudent reserve.

Cultivate Your Alternate GSR

When you have fulfilled your commitment as GSR, the group's Alternate GSR should be ready to step in and fill the commitment. That individual will more likely be ready to do so if he or she has regularly attended the ASC meetings with you, and has assisted you in providing the link between your group and the ASC.

If there is no Alternate GSR when you have fulfilled your commitment, another member of the group will hopefully be willing to serve as the GSR. It will undoubtedly be easier to find someone to be of service if the outgoing GSR does not characterize the position as one to dread or detest. To speak of the GSR commitment in this manner may scare off a member who might otherwise have found the experience to be rewarding. Being a good trusted servant requires the willingness to learn new things. Service can be an excellent means to acquire important qualities such as commitment, accountability, trustworthiness, and selflessness.

Important WEASC Contact Information:

Position	Name	Phone No.
Chair		
Vice Chair		
Secretary		
Treasurer		
RCM		
Activities Chair		
H&I Chair		
Phonelines/PI Chair		
Literature Chair		
NAYC Chair		

Helplines and Websites:

Area Helpline	(818) 787-9706
Regional Helpline	(800) 863-2962
Regional Office	(626) 359-0084
World Service Office	(818) 773-9999
Regional Website	http://www.todayna.org
NA World Website	http://www.na.org

WEASC VALUES

One definition of values is: "A principle, standard, or quality considered worthwhile or desirable." In this section we will list a small number of the values held dear by the members of the WEASC.

- ◆ Through embracing the principle that personal recovery depends on NA unity, we shall strive to stay unified and keep our common welfare uppermost in our deliberations.
- ◆ Assisting the groups' purpose of carrying the message to the still-suffering addict is considered of paramount importance. Therefore, once every two years, the WEASC will undertake an inventory to determine how well the body is fulfilling its mission.
- ◆ Our discussions shall always be steeped in mutual respect and the desire to be of service to our groups and Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. Should strife ever arise, we shall seek out the guidance of the spiritual backbone of our collective service efforts – the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts and the guidance of a loving Higher Power.
- ◆ The minority opinion is always valued and will be respected and heard. As the Ninth Concept states: ". . . it is often the lone voice, offering new information or a unique perspective on things, that saves us from hasty or misinformed decisions. In Narcotics Anonymous, we are encouraged to respect that lone voice, to protect it, even to seek it out, for without it our service decisions would undoubtedly suffer."
- ◆ Our trusted servants seek to serve and guide, never to govern, forever embracing the humility of principles before personalities.

WEASC Values were developed to be a part of the WEASC Guidelines

VALUABLE RESOURCE MATERIAL

Twelve Concepts for NA Service – booklet available through literature ordering process

A Guide to Local Service in Narcotics Anonymous - available through literature ordering process

WEASC Guidelines – available from Area Support Person

TWELVE TRADITIONS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.
2. For the group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stay clean.
4. Each group is autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every NA group ought to be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. NA, as such ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinions on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR NA SERVICE

1. To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure, which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.
2. The final responsibility and authority for NA service rests with the NA groups.
3. The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.
4. Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.
5. For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.
6. Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.
7. All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making process.
8. Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.
9. All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.
10. Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.
11. NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.
12. In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government.